

## SHORT COMMUNICATION

**Two Red Data Book beetles in Surrey**—On 14.v.1995, whilst beating for lepidoptera larvae at a site near Mickleham, Surrey, I dislodged from wild privet (*Ligustrum*) a beetle which was sufficiently distinctive that I decided to retain it. The beetle was passed to my father who identified it from Joy as *Cryptocephalus coryli* (L.) (Chrysomelidae) (Plate 1 Figs 3.4) and returned it to me without comment. It was only when I was entering details of the capture on the Recorder database that I discovered that the published status of the species was RDB1. Shirt (1987) gives records for Surrey, West Kent, Bedford., Notts., and Easternness; and indicated that the last specimen had been taken at Box Hill in 1958. In addition Hyman and Parsons (1992) give East Norfolk, Northampton, Salop and North Lincoln. Recent communication with John Owen has revealed that it has been taken at at least two sites since the Red Data Book was published. One site is in the Chilterns, the other in the Mickleham area where the species has some history. Fowler (1890) recorded it from there last century—"On young hazels in June; rare: . . . Mickleham, Headley Lane, Box Hill . . .". W. West exhibited a specimen from there at the meeting of the "South London" on 14.vi.1894. E.C. Bedwell took several there in the 1920s, and A.A. Allen took it on 8.vi.1941 and 27.vi.1943. F.D. Buck beat one from birch at Box Hill, 23.v.1948. R.J. Bartell had it in 1958, and more recently one was taken from birch there, 15.vii.1986. Privet does not seem to be mentioned as a host plant, and indeed there is no evidence that the beetle was eating it. In captivity, offered oak, hazel, birch and hawthorn, it appeared to eat only the birch. A further single example of this beetle was beaten from birch at the same site on 6.vii.1996 and between 6–20.vi.1997 no fewer than four were seen, including two females. Clearly the species is resident here but at a fairly low density and is more or less localized to one corner of a single field. One of the females has laid about one hundred eggs which are currently being reared to study the beetle's life history. Hopefully it will be possible to find wild larvae in the future.

Another uncommon beetle which has recently come my way is *Lymexylon navale* (L.) (Lymexylidae), published as RDB2. Several females were discovered at Richmond Park, 22.vii.1995, apparently ovipositing in the cut end of a sweet chestnut log (*Castanea*). This species has been recorded recently from Headley; Ashted Common, seen most years this decade; and on several occasions from Richmond where John Owen found a swarm ovipositing on an oak (*Quercus*) log on 4.vii.1980. British breeding records of this species all relate to oak and so sweet chestnut would appear to be a new and alternative foodplant. This is not entirely surprising as a number of beetle species, such as the bark beetles *Dryocoetinus villosus* (Fab.) (Scolytidae) and *Platypus cylindrus* (Fab.) (Platypodidae), and wood-feeding moths such as *Synanthedon vespiformis* (L.) (Sesiidae), will utilize either species.

I am indebted to John Owen for information on the distribution and habits of these two species.—GRAHAM A. COLLINS, 15 Hurst Way, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 7AP.

## REFERENCES

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